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## FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

### RED TRACTOR 2021 STANDARDS REVIEW – CONSULTATION

Red Tractor are in the process of reviewing their standards which will come into effect from November 2021. This is their usual practice, undertaken every 3-4 years. The proposed standards are open for consultation until 5<sup>th</sup> March and you can have your say by completing the survey found here:

<https://redtractor.citizenspace.com/standards/red-tractor-2021-standards-consultation/>



This is relevant to all dairy, beef, sheep and pig farmers, together with cereal and potato growers within the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme.

### MANAGING NEONATAL CALF SCOUR

The most common causes of scour in neonatal calves are **E. coli**, **rotavirus**, **coronavirus** and **cryptosporidium**. The first three of these can be prevented by **vaccinating** the dam 12-3 weeks prior to calving with either Rotavec Corona or Bovigen Scour, and cryptosporidium by treating the calf for consecutive days from birth with Halocur. It is therefore crucial to reach a diagnosis so that the most appropriate prevention measures can be followed.

Prevention of scour begins with the provision of an adequate volume of good quality **colostrum** (corresponding to 10% of the calf's bodyweight) given in a timely manner (<6 hours from birth), together with **excellent hygiene** in the calving areas and calf pens, including appropriate disinfection.

If calves do develop scour however, then it is crucial that an oral rehydration solution is provided, such as **HydrFAST**. This provides the calf with the necessary electrolytes that are lost through scour, together with other agents to maximise the absorption of these electrolytes, as well as a plentiful and readily utilised source of energy.



At the first signs of scour, feed **2 litres** of prepared HydrFAST solution **twice daily and continue for at least 2 days**. Also **continue milk feeding** the calf or allow the calf to suckle as normal if possible because ongoing nutrition from milk is important for the calf's recovery. If milk feeding, ensure a 3-hour gap between HydrFAST and milk feeding. Administer HydrFAST orally, preferably using a feeding bottle with teat. Alternatively, bucket or tube feeding can be used.

We wish vet **Clare Akers** all the best as she goes on maternity leave again towards the end of February.

**MSD FLOCKCHECK** – The window for subsidised Enzootic Abortion and Toxoplasma serology testing on barren/aborted ewes opens on 1st February and runs until the 30th June. Six to eight ewes should be blood sampled and the cost of the lab fee is covered by MSD (the only cost to you is the blood sampling fee and visit if the ewes are not brought to the surgery). Additional sheep can be tested and further tests – for example Border disease or trace element screening – can be performed from the same samples, but at their usual test prices. For any further information please speak to any of the farm team.



### SHOULD WE WORM EWES AT LAMBING TIME?

Until three years ago the advice was always to worm *all* ewes at lambing/turn out to prevent pasture contamination and reduce infections in lambs. “An observational study of ewe treatments at lambing on early infection in lambs on UK sheep farms” (Learmount and others, 2017) found however that there was no difference in lamb worm egg counts at 10-16 weeks of age based on whether the ewe had been treated or not: in other words, blanket treating the ewes has no impact upon the rate of worm infections in lambs.

The study was performed on 16 UK commercial sheep farms ranging in flock size of 80-1200 ewes. Each flock was split into two, with half the ewes treated and the other half not. This was done for three consecutive years (2012, 2013 and 2014) and there was no difference between the type of wormer used, the region within the UK or farm type on the subsequent lamb worm egg counts.

This research has since been repeated on several farms with similar outcomes. As a result of these repeated findings, it is now recommended that **ewes should only be target treated** based on **body condition score** (thin ewes treated), **dag score** (dirtiness around hind quarters), and **age** (ewe lambs treated as they have less immunity). For more information please speak to any of the farm team.

### SOME DRUG CHANGES

We will shortly be changing our 50ml and 100ml Draxxin to a new generic called **Tullavis**. This has exactly the same licensing, dose rates and withdrawal periods as Draxxin but is more competitively priced. Tullavis is not available in 20ml bottles so we will continue to stock this, however the price of this is also reducing slightly.

We will also shortly be switching Nuflor to **Fenflor**.

*Remember to use antibiotics responsibly and ideally pursue vaccination to reduce pneumonia risk.*

We have been notified from all our external laboratories that there may be some delays to the usual turnaround times on certain tests, as well as price rises or unavailability of certain tests. This is due to the outsourcing of certain tests to labs on the continent, which is now being impacted by Brexit. It is unlikely to cause us significant problems however and you will be advised if it were to do so before proceeding.

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